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Holiday cheer in the Highlands

Learn more about two festive events happening this weekend on pages 2 and 3.

Spreading sparkle

Read about how giving as little as a smile to someone on the street can help lift spirits on page 6.

Have a "green" Christmas

By making sure to properly recycle during your holiday gatherings. Read more on page 10.

Barred Owl After Lunch by Mike Milton won third place in Haliburton Highlands Camera Club's Fill the Frame competition in November. See more on page 13. /Submitted

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Highlands Festival Singers Christmas concert is back live

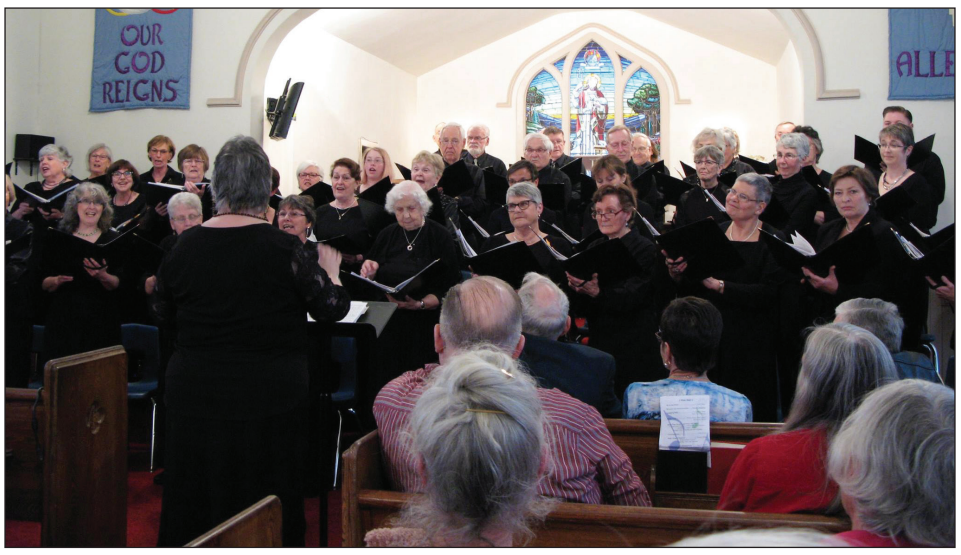
JERELYN CRADEN
Special to *County Life*

The expression, they "sang their hearts out" is what the Highlands Festival Singers (HFS) will be doing at their much-anticipated Christmas concert, Hallelujah! We're Back Live! on Dec. 4 and 6, at the United Church in Haliburton. Raring to go after a two-year hiatus from performing live due to COVID, the choir will not only be spreading the spirit of joy, they will also be celebrating their 31st anniversary.

With great enthusiasm, Highlands Festival Singers Director, Melissa Stephens said, "Hallelujah! We're Back Live! is a really great concert that the choir is working really hard on … not your typical Christmas music. It's a great way to start the season."

"The first concert we ever did was Handel's Messiah," Stephens said. "That's where the word, Hallelujah [in the title of the concert], comes from. I will be speaking a bit about the history of the choir, and there will also be a short three-minute video of pictures taken over the past three decades that were submitted by choir members."

Today, the HFS has thirty singers, men and women. "It's pretty well-balanced right now," Stephens said. "There are five tenors and five or six bass and then the rest are sopranos and altos."

"Our first two years, we did our Christmas concert at the Haliburton Legion. We did some years at the high school. And some years we split it between Haliburton United, and Highland Hills United in Minden, which has very nice acoustics," Stephens said. Throughout the years, Haliburton United has been the choir's rehearsal space of choice.

The Highlands Festival Singers are returning with their annual Christmas concert after a two-year hiatus at the Haliburton United Church on Dec. 4 and Dec. 6. /Submitted

Musical highlights

"We're doing two pieces from Handel's Messiah," Stephens said, *Worthy is the Lamb* and *Hallelujah Chorus*. We're also doing a piece called, *Sure on this Shining Night*, which is stunning." *Winter Wonderland* and other popular Christmas songs will be performed. "We'll also be doing our crazy rendition of, *Deck the Halls*, with a funny time signature, and a piece called, *Christmas Goes Classical*, with all kinds of new lyrics put to classical tunes. Some are orchestral pieces, and some are from operas. It's very different, and I do not know of another group that's done it in concert."

A favourite choir pick

Stephens shared the choir's excitement about performing the song, *We Rise Again*, recorded by the Rankin Family and written by Canadian composer Leo Dubinsky, from Sydney, Nova Scotia. Filled with uplifting imagery, "It's kind of like we're rising from the pandemic," Stephens said. "The melody is lovely, and the lyrics are inspiring and powerful."

When the waves roll on over the waters
And the ocean cries
We look to our sons and daughters
To explain our lives
As if a child could tell us why
That as sure as the sunrise
As sure as the sea
As sure as the wind in the trees
We rise again in the faces
Of our children

Behind the scenes

HFS president, Beth Kipping mentioned the great Executive she works with including: "Victoria Bingham (past president), Marsha Sweet (secretary), Norma Goodger (treasurer), and three Members at Large, Patty Luubert, Joan Hawley, and Ken Loney."

Regarding masks

"We've been rehearsing with masks and will stop next week," Kipping said. "Before the choir comes to our next rehearsal, each member will do an antigen test and send in the results. At the concert, we will perform without masks. And, for everyone's safety, audience members will be required to wear a mask. For those who arrive without one, we will have masks on hand at the door."

Giving back

"Every year, we give a $500 music/art scholarship to the high school," Stephens said. "The year of the first flood in Minden, we donated a percentage of proceeds from our concert to those whose homes were hit hard."

The HFS is ready to give back again with an inspiring concert that will kickstart the holiday season with spirit and joy.

Concert details and ticket information

Hallelujah! We're Back Live! will be performed on Dec. 4 at 3 p.m. and Dec. 6 at 7:30 p.m. at the United Church, Haliburton, 10 George Street.

Tickets are $15 and available at Master's Book Store, Haliburton and Minden Pharmasave, Minden. They can also be purchased at: highlandsfestivalsingers@gmail.com by E-transfer: bkipping@bell.net, or at the door.

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County Life

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Tour de Forest Christmas Art Show and Sale

JERELYN CRADEN

Special to *County Life*

The trickiest part of an outdoor event is, you got it! The weather. Especially in the late fall and winter. One super rainy or snowy day can ruin a whole year's worth of planning and effort. Enter, the much-loved Tour de Forest (TDF) Christmas Art Show and Sale, which is doing things differently this year. Instead of visitors driving to artists' home-studios in possible incremental weather and paying high prices for gasoline to get there, they can easily, conveniently, and comfortably shop for beautiful, unique, hand-crafted Christmas items and meet the artists who made them, in one warm, easily accessible location – indoors at the United Church in Haliburton on Dec. 3, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Louise Ewing, TDF jewelry maker and event coordinator said, "Before COVID there were some Christmas events, but due to the pandemic they pretty well fell by the wayside. Nicki Hagarty and I [a TDF participating artist] came up with the idea after our last tour in August. We thought that if we could get a certain number of people together who would draw a crowd inside an easily accessible place, we could try it for Christmas. We presented the idea to the [TDF] group, and they thought it was great, so we rented space at the church. It's kind of a trial, and hopefully it will grow and that we can do it again next year."

Shoppers are in for a treat! Ten popular TDF artists will be selling a wide range of their hand-crafted items from paintings, pottery, clothing, fabric art, hand-beaded jewelry, and wood carving, to watercolour and acrylic paintings and stained glass. Edilicious will also be there selling frozen cheese appetizers and other specialty foods that can add great flare to holiday gatherings.

Plus, what could be more enjoyable on a cold wintry day than sipping on hot apple cider, compliments of the TDF, as you shop amongst eye-candy? Oh, yes, also hearing beautiful violin music being played by TDF contemporary landscape painter, Barb Hart. At other times, visitors will hear popular Christmas songs as they shop.

"The TDF has been operating for sixteen years," Ewing said. "For most of the artists in the tour, this is their main source of income. This year, we've chosen the 4Cs food bank as our local charity so that we can give back to the community. We're putting up a Christmas tree and each of the participating artists are going to donate hand-crafted ornaments to hang on the tree. For example, I am donating twenty of my tiny beaded Christmas tree decorations. So, we're going to decorate the tree and also a table with beautiful handmade cards and other Christmas gift items made and donated by TDF artists, with all proceeds from sales going to the 4Cs. Leslie Banner and Dawn Brohman, 4Cs directors, will be at the 4Cs table where visitors can also donate directly to the charity."

Ewing added, "As a group, we've decided to choose a different charity each time we host an event. For instance, we'll choose a different charity for the next Tour de Forest in August."

Stoneware and porcelain potter Charlene McConnell, a twelve-year TDF artist said, "We're really looking forward to meeting our clientele at a Christmas show that supports the 4Cs community food bank. And, of course, we're hoping that people will come out and enjoy the items we have made for Christmas and for gift giving. It's right in town, so there's not a lot of driving, and people can stop by for just a short time if they wish."

When asked what her donated Christmas ornament will be, she said, "They're mostly porcelain, and I have quite a selection of items with a hand-painted Christmas holly motif. You can hang them on a tree or on a bottle of wine that you might bring to a dinner party."

Parking and restrooms will be available at the church.

Honouring the church's mandate, visitors will be required to wear masks.

Haliburton United Church is located at 10 George Street, Haliburton.

For more information, call Louise Ewing at: 705-457-5831.

Snowy sunrise

A Sunday morning sunrise on Pelaw Lake. /LAURA SMITH Staff

I love a parade

IRV HANDLER
Haliburton Rotarian

Members of the Rotary Club of Haliburton were all smiles while walking with their float during the 18th annual Haliburton Santa Claus Parade on Friday, Nov. 25. /VIVIAN COLLINGS Staff

When I was about 5 years old, the Toronto Santa Claus parade passed within a block of our house. That morning, my mother bundled me up to the point of absurdity and sent me out in the street with a Thermus full of hot chocolate and my 11 year old sister as my temporary guardian. I was mesmerized by the crowd. Vendors were selling popcorn, candy apples and hot chestnuts, a food I was unfamiliar with. Other vendors were walking through the crowd swinging a whistling bird on a stick. I wanted one desperately, but we'd been sent out onto the street without any money

The parade itself was larger than life with giant floats, marching bands, snowmen, elves and magical storybook creatures. And clowns. Clowns were everywhere. And while I loved the roly-poly clowns, the upside-down clowns were my favourite. I was delighted when one would stop and shake hands with his feet. But the highlight of the parade was the floats. The coolest floats had mechanical moving parts. I was later to learn that girl and boy scouts, crouching in the interior of the float, provided the motion by manually turning cranks.

I was fascinated by the costumed children sitting on each float, waving to the adoring crowd. Who were these children? How did they come to occupy their vaulted position on top of a float? Whoever they were, I knew I wanted to be one of them. I wanted to be in the parade. I wanted to wave as the entire city lined the streets to see me. The extrovert's ultimate fantasy.

But I was also a realist. We were an immigrant family of modest means. My father was a butcher in the city's then Jewish market. We didn't even celebrate Christmas. There was no way I would be able to find an entry point into the parade.

We moved further north into the city when I was 10, and I stopped going to the parade as an annual event. In the next few decades, I would occasionally intersect with the parade. For a short time during my teenage years, my father's souvenir store was on the direct path of the parade. Sadly, sitting in my father's store on the day of the parade, I was only able to see the backside of the parade.

I resumed my annual pilgrimage to the parade when I had children of my own. After an absence of 20 years, I was able to see the parade again through my children's eyes. I was delighted to see that the upside clowns had survived the test of time and were still attempting to shake my daughter's hand with their feet.

The parade was as magnificent as ever. I still loved the floats, particularly the mechanical ones. But I gained an appreciation of the other components of the

see page 5

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from page 4

parade such as the costumed marchers and the bands. Just like in my first parade, I was fascinated by the crowd. It was Toronto at its best. People from every part of the city gathered to have a giant street party in peace and fellowship.

Watching the parade, I realized that I still wanted to be in it. I knew that it was now a relatively easy thing to do. They were always putting the word out for volunteers. But life being what it is, I never acted on the impulse. My dream would have continued to be unfulfilled had I not been introduced to someone connected to the parade. That year, my youngest daughter was a snowflake princess on the Toyland float. And I was a marshall in her section.

This was it. I had made it into the parade. And not as a costumed character, but as a marshall. Someone entrusted to keeping the parade running smoothly. The job was pretty easy. Although we were expected to keep the marchers in straight line, our primary focus was the safety of the children in our section. All I really had to do was keep my eyes on the children on my float. But as easy as it sounds, I found it next to impossible to stop myself from watching the adoring crowd as I walked pass. It was a heady experience. An estimated million people were on the street watching me go by. Some kids wanted to shake my hand as if I was a roly-poly clown. Others thrust letters to Santa in my hand. But my marching orders were clear, I was not to interact with the crowd, and so I kindly withheld my handshake. But I did collect the letters to Santa and deposited them in a mailbox at the end of the parade.

I returned as a marshall every year thereafter. My daughter graduated from a float kid to a marcher and eventually dropped out of the parade. But I continued to marshall. My granddaughter eventually became a float kid in my section. After a few years, she dropped out of the parade as well. But I kept coming back, year after year. Eventually I ended up marshalling for 21 consecutive years and only ended my streak when COVID-19 forced the parade off the streets of Toronto. By then I was retired and living in Haliburton Ontario.

Haliburton Village has its own Santa Claus parade. It is very much a different experience than the Toronto parade. The Toronto parade runs for 5.6 kilometers. Haliburton is two blocks long. Toronto is run with military precision. Haliburton not so much. The Haliburton parade is a wild affair where anyone can decorate up their pick-up truck and join the parade. Some floats were ingenious including a school bus with an inflatable snowman in each window. The Haliburton parade also includes an assortment of animals, including dogs, ponies and donkeys, some in costumes, others au naturel. Sadly, there are no upside-down clowns.

As the pandemic eased, the Haliburton Santa Claus parade put out the word that they were looking for volunteer marshalls. I dusted off my Toronto marshall's vest and was back in the parade. The job was significantly different in Haliburton. Rather than marshaling the children in the parade, I was assigned traffic duty in the staging area. While the line-up in Toronto was strictly regulated, in Haliburton, the order of the parade was determined by the order in which the floats and marchers arrived in the staging area. In Toronto, the parade provided costumes and make-up. In Haliburton, everyone was responsible for their own appearance. Once again, the full range of human imagination was on full display. My favourite was a woman dressed as a Canada Post mailbox. I wasn't sure if she was collecting letters to Santa.

In the end, I realized it didn't matter if I was in Haliburton or Toronto; watching the parade or participating in it; I love a parade.

Community Events

Send your event listing to classifieds@haliburtonpress.com

The Highlands Opera Studio's Youth and Young Adult Opera Club

a screening of La Bohème by Puccini. First two acts followed by set building with gingerbread!
When: Thursday, Dec 1, 6:30 to 8:45 p.m.
Where: the Haliburton Highlands Museum
Contact: RSVP to info@highlandsoperastudio.com.

Christmas Craft Sale

When: Saturday, Dec. 3, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Where: Lloyd Watson Centre, 2249 Loop Road, Wilberforce
Unique variety of crafts, baking and Christmas gifts.
An appetizing lunch, tea and coffee are available.
Contact Barb Schofield 705-448-2598 or email wilberforcebarb@yahoo.ca.

The Minden Legion Craft Show

When: Dec. 4, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Where: Minden Legion
Come on out and see what our vendors have for your Christmas Shopping. Light refreshments will be available.

The "Highlands Festival Singers"

directed by Melissa Stephens celebrate the Christmas Season with "Hallelujah! We're Back – LIVE!"
When: Sunday, Dec. 4 at 3 p.m. and Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 7:30 p.m.
Where: Haliburton United Church, 10 George Street
Celebrating our 31st Anniversary we are singing selections from Handel's Messiah, Fun Christmas songs and some lovely Christmas Classics.
Cost: $15 General Admission. Tickets available at Master's Book Store, Haliburton, Minden Pharmasave, Minden, or by calling 705-457-4916.

Christmas Celebration and Drop-in

When: Friday, December 9, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Where: Wilberforce Red Cross Outpost Historic House, 2314 Loop Road, Wilberforce
Come and join the celebration of Christmas at this unique place of history and service to the community and surrounding area. Refreshments and Festivity a sure thing. Contact Barb Schofield 705-448-2598 or email wilberforcebarb@yahoo.ca.

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Adding sparkle to the season

EMILY STONEHOUSE
County Life Staff

WHAT IS IT about the holiday season that makes us want to give back?

Is it the shift in seasons? The abundance of Hallmark movies airing on each channel? The magic that floats through the air like snowflakes; settling on the eyelashes of Christmas shoppers?

Who knows. But we cannot deny that it is there, swirling all round us before it settles into a state of slumber in early-January.

These few weeks in the Haliburton Highlands are busy ones; filled with holiday markets, celebrations, parades, fundraisers, tree-lightings, and Christmas carols. There's something about walking down the main street in Haliburton, underneath the hanging snowflake lights, and just feeling like you are the main character in a holiday movie, with a backstory consisting of something along the lines of getting snowed into your small hometown over Christmas, leaving your grinchy boyfriend, and marrying a man who exclusively owns plaid flannels. For those of you who have never seen a Hallmark movie, that is the plotline to 90 percent of them. You're welcome.

Whether you're daydreaming about rom-com life or not, there is lots to keep you busy here. Yet, with all the hustle and bustle of Christmas, let's not forget about the kindness.

In a previous article that ran in the *Echo* and the *Times*, I did a feature on the Heat Bank in Haliburton County. In the article, I mentioned that the poverty rate in Haliburton County, according to the SIRCH website, hovers at 17.2 per cent, with over 25 per cent of children living in low-income homes.

During this time of year, we see a boom in helping hands. Assistance comes in the form of volunteerism, donations, fundraisers, and bake sales. This is the time of year when the Christmas magic is more than an abstract sparkle; it becomes a tangible by-product of giving hearts and helping hands. The world becomes a brighter place, and many of the weights seem to be lifted.

Temporarily.

After the big boom of the holidays, some of the sparkle starts to tarnish. The slump of the winter months settle in, and the time for giving is given up.

The intentions of this article are not to guilt anyone into giving all year. I recognize that that's impossible. We all have our own limitations, restrictions, and stories.

My intention is to remind individuals to give for the sake of giving. Remember for the sake of remembering. Shed kindness, just to be kind. It doesn't have to be during a certain time of year. The poverty in this community isn't something that fizzles out after Christmas; it's something that is a blatant reality all year.

So, help where you can help. Give whenever. Educate yourself about the needs of your community. Smile at someone on the street. Spread that little Christmas sparkle during the dark and dim days of the winter months. Kindness can go a long way.

There are a series of organizations in this community where you can help in some capacity, including the Heat Bank, SIRCH, Food Banks, and volunteer organizations that coordinate community support. If you are someone seeking support at this time, please do not hesitate to reach out, and ask for help.

Whether you can donate your time, supplies, money, or even just a smile to a passerby, no amount of kindness is too small, and every little bit adds to that magic holiday sparkle. Any time in the year.

Top 10 reasons to ban mistletoe

STEVE GALEA
Humour Columnist

OF ALL THE strange Christmas traditions we have, none, to me, is stranger than kissing under the mistletoe. It's definitely an outdated tradition that makes a lot of people uncomfortable.

With that in mind, I can think of 10 reasons why the tradition should be banned. They are:

1. Makes kids question why we don't have missile fingers too.
2. People who lack plant identification skills smooch needlessly under Boston ferns.
3. The creepy guy no one knows at the Christmas party.
4. The creepy guy everyone knows at the Christmas party.
5. Everyone hides behind furniture when I stand under it anyhow.
6. Most people would rather fist bump.
7. Cold sore season.
8. It's a trick invented by the patriarchy to sell more Chapstick.
9. Easily replaced by the "Kiss Me, I'm Irish" tee-shirt.
10. That one guy who refers to it as "first base!"

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In praise of local galleries

Some women, I know it,
Are playwright and poet
Purveyors of short story, too
Acrylics, or potter
Or palette with water:
Creators impart points of view

I would also endorse
Our male artists, of course
But I know many fewer of those
I've seen their grand work
Songs and colours with perk
They have talent, and it really shows

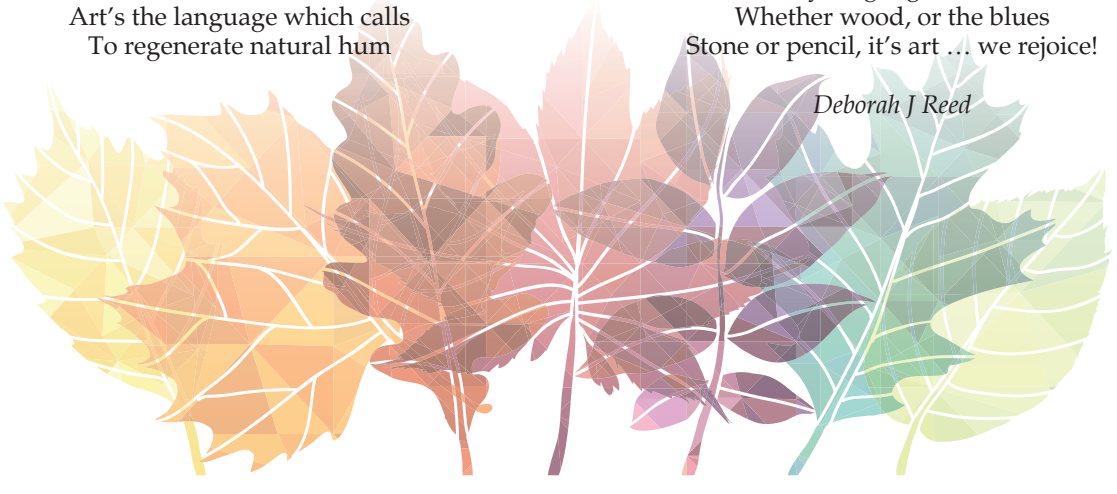
There are galleries here
Which are clearly top gear
And invite hungry public to come
In and outside their walls
Art's the language which calls
To regenerate natural hum

It's that old ohm of heart
And a culture kickstart
When our urges brave big things to say
Quiet easels can show
That blank canvases grow
If our visions get space to display

When technique speaks in stitch
Fabrics duly bewitch
As we watch how a spirit heeds call
Others author or drum
Use their jewelry "green thumb"
Or make beauty from nothing at all!

So to blowers of glass
Dancers solo or mass
Let's be grateful for venues to voice
Every language of muse
Whether wood, or the blues
Stone or pencil, it's art … we rejoice!

Deborah J Reed



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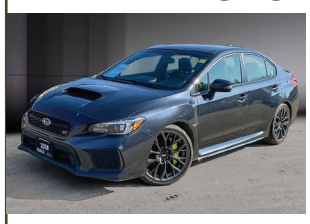

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H22-074A

$156
Bi-Weekly Taxes-In @ 9.99% APR, 72 Months

148,903kms
Alloys, V6, Clean Carfax, Great Condition

$15,998
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2020 JEEP COMPASS TRAILHAWK
H22-032A

$277
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H22-038A

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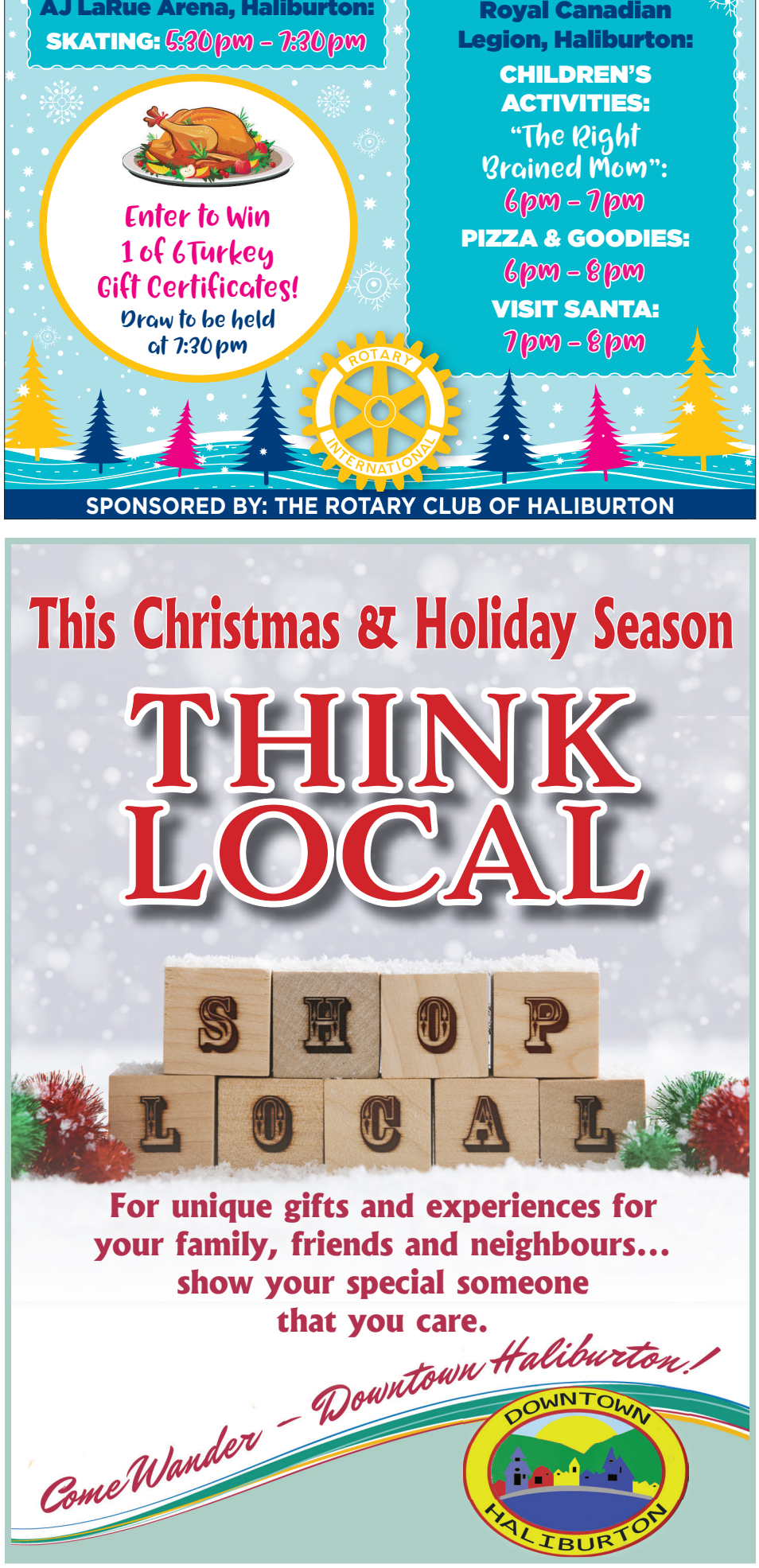

Celebrating Hallmark December with hot chocolate. /Submitted by Janet Trull

Happy Hallmark December

JANET TRULL

Special to County Life

I blame my trick knee on the fact that I spent an entire snowy afternoon watching the Hallmark Channel. There is always a series of unfortunate events leading to life-changing moments, and this was one of them. I'm committed to walking three kilometres a day to prevent further deterioration of my bones and, in particular, my clicking knee joint. Due to high winds and blinding snow, I cut my walk short and decided to make up the lost time on the stationary bike in the basement. The man cave TV is programmed for ten thousand sports channels, so it took some surfing to find a show that didn't have a net or goal posts or flags. Something without balls.

I arrived, by some miracle, in Hallmark Land. A place I had never visited. And yet, I recognized Main Street immediately. Post Office, bakery, pharmacy, a kindly old guy sitting on a bench with a well-behaved dog. It was all oddly familiar. I felt like I knew what was about to happen. And then, there she was, the cute single blonde girl returned from the big city for the holidays. Sad. A bit. Not too much. This would be her first Christmas without… something.

Her name is Holly (or Ivy, or Noelle). She is super smart and super well-dressed and super successful and yet? What is missing? Pick a Hallmark card. Any card.

First Christmas without a beloved parent or grandparent or pet.

A vague uneasiness regarding a very important career promotion.

An engagement ring that somehow, despite its huge and glittery beauty, does not fit quite right.

An arrogant stranger who is super annoying. Until he isn't.

What is so compelling about these cheesy narratives?

I doubled my workout and biked all the way to the predictable ending. As the girl reaches up to put a star on the top of the Christmas tree in the middle of town, she tumbles off the ladder into the arms of the muscular firefighter.

Even though my experience of Christmas is very different, I could not ignore the nostalgic twinge in my heart as I fell for every Hallmark trick in the book. Carollers, bustling shoppers, hot chocolate, kids in cozy pyjamas, and softly falling snow.

Christmas is often messy and stressful and expensive and exhausting. It is the season of managing disappointments. I did not get the Chatty Cathy in the bleak midwinter of 1962. And in 1984? The day was almost ruined by the desolation on my daughter's face when she opened Baby Alive and saw that Baby was not alive at all.

"It's just a doll!" she wailed.

I'm not complaining. My parents filled me in on the sad Christmases of their depression-era childhoods. A saggy stocking. An orange. A homemade thing that Gramps whittled.

Hallmark gets all that. They know what we want. Shortbread and eggnog and Christmas parties where nobody coughs. A real fire in the fireplace. New parents for the neighbour's orphaned nephew. And, most of all, true love.

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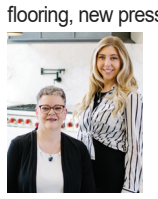

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Invite the recycling bins to your holiday party

THIS HOLIDAY season, it seems like more and more people are feeling confident attending, or hosting, a Christmas party for family and friends.

It's heartwarming to see traditions rekindle and new memories created with love, merriment, and tasty treats.

But just because you're having a group of people to your home to celebrate doesn't mean your household's recycling practices need to go out the window. There are simple ways to make sure your guests know where and how to recycle.

JOHN WATSON
Special to County Life

First and foremost, invite your recycling bins to the party. Use one bin to collect recycling for containers like cans and bottles, and another bin to collect recycling for papers like paper cups. Put the bins side-by-side, and include a garbage bin for anything that can't be recycled. Use a clear bag in your garbage bin.

If you're serving alcohol, be sure to provide an extra bin to collect empty wine, beer and spirit bottles, cans and containers. This will make it easy for you to take back the empties to The Beer Store for a return on your deposit.

Do you have a composter, digester or FoodCycler? Include a bin to collect food scraps like lemon and lime slices, and other food waste that your composting system can process.

While most people are familiar with sorting waste, the rules of what's accepted in recycling for containers and recycling for papers varies municipality to municipality. And if your guests are coming from larger urban municipalities, they may not be familiar anymore with separating containers from papers. Hang posters of acceptable materials to help your guests recycle right. Check your local municipality's website for a waste sorting guide or printable posters.

Better yet, get the kids involved and make some sorting posters that showcase the items you'll actually have at your party. Take coloured Bristol board and cut them into big arrows that point down to your recycling and garbage bins. Hot glue or tape items onto the arrows like pop cans (recycling for containers), paper cups (recycling for papers), and paper napkins (garbage).

While recycling is great, remember the first two of the 3Rs – reduce and reuse. You can reduce your party's waste by avoiding disposable items (like disposable plastic cutlery that goes in the garbage). Instead provide reusable options like reusable cutlery and cups.

You may think that this is a lot of effort but think about the time you'll save during the clean-up of your party. Most of your waste will already be properly sorted, making it quick and easy to drop-off acceptable items at your local landfill or The Beer Store.

Imagine the positive impact you can have on the environment if your next holiday party minimizes waste by reducing and reusing, encourages guests to properly sort waste, and provides accessible recycling, composting and garbage bins to easily capture items. You'll truly have a "green" Christmas!

John Watson is the Environmental Manager for the Municipality of Dysart et al.

Our Season's Greetings issue of *County Life* is coming up

Send in:
- Your favourite holiday recipe,
- A photo of your Christmas lights display
- A copy of your child's letter to Santa

To vivian@haliburtonpress.com by Monday, Dec. 5 for a chance to be featured.

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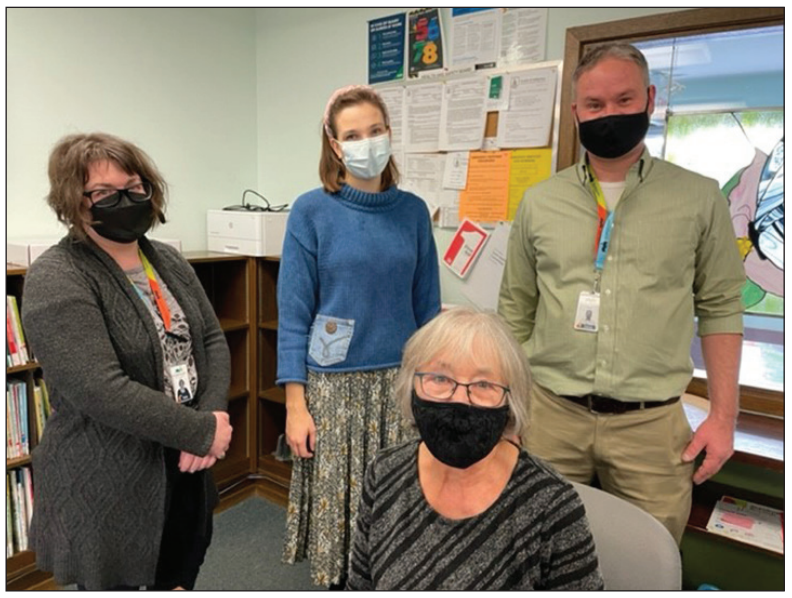
Stanhope Library announces December re-opening

AMANDA DUNCOMBE-LEE
Special to *County Life*



Haliburton County Public Library administration staff are pleased to announce the re-opening of the Stanhope library branch. From left, Erin Kernohan-Berning, technology and systems librarian, Hillary Montgomery, programming & outreach coordinator, Gayle Wetmore, branch supervisor, and Chris Stephenson, HCPL CEO. /Photos submitted

The Haliburton County Public Library Stanhope branch has a new concrete walkway that was paved this year for it's re-opening on Dec. 3.

The Stanhope branch of the Haliburton County Public Library (HCPL) will re-open to the public on Dec. 3, after being closed for over two years to undergo renovations.

In 2019, with the help of the Township of Algonquin Highlands, an Enabling Accessibility Grant was awarded to upgrade the accessible features of the library, including a new lift, automatic door, and an exterior concrete ramp. The library initially closed to the public in March 2020.

Library staff said that while they await the arrival of several missing parts required to complete the renovation, library patrons will once again be able to browse the collection, attend programs and utilize library services in Stanhope.

HCPL also plans to host a grand opening celebration to recognize accessibility improvements made at the branch once the project has been fully completed.

In a November HCPL media release, Gayle Wetmore, branch supervisor, said she is encouraged by the progress. "I'm so excited for the re-opening. I look forward to welcoming back familiar faces and meeting new members to the branch. I've missed everyone so much."

The renovation was initially planned to be completed during the COVID-19 lockdown closures, but supply chain problems resulted in a delayed project timeline. While the exterior concrete ramp has been completed and the foyer has been refreshed, staff are still waiting for the new automatic door, as well as an inspector to approve the lift that will accommodate wheelchair users down to the basement and up to the library.

Library CEO/chief librarian Chris Stephenson said he is excited to welcome the community back to the library. "We're grateful for their patience and really excited to welcome them back. They can see a familiar face with Gayle Wetmore, who is working very hard to prepare the branch for opening," he said.

The library, located at 1109 North Shore Road, will officially open on Saturday, Dec. 3 at 10 a.m. Refreshments will be served, and Stephenson will be there to personally welcome patrons and let them know about new programs and services coming to Stanhope.

"I hope as many people can come as possible on Saturday," said Stephenson. "I look forward to welcoming them personally. We really appreciate the help of the municipal staff and council for making this possible – helping with the grant, coordinating the work, and making the decision to allow the library to resume operations."

Christmas Toy & Food Drive 2022

Join the Haliburton County Home Builders' Association and help us to make a difference!

As the Christmas season commences, The Haliburton County Home Builders Association would like to encourage you to include its Christmas Challenge in your plans. Large or small, each gift will help fill the Christmas hampers distributed by the Food Banks in Haliburton County. If you aren't sure what to collect simply gather local gift certificates.

Option 1: Call - text 705-457-6901, email info@hchba.ca in advance to arrange a date to pick up your gifts. We will take them to the local distribution centers.

Option 2: Drop off your gifts at one of our partners. We will then pick up from there.

HALIBURTON CHRYSLER DODGE Jep RAM

Partner in Haliburton,
Haliburton Chrysler – 13533 Highway 118

Partner in Minden,
Ridgewood Ford – 12560 Highway 35 Ford Ridgewood Ford Sales

Other Drop off locations
Haliburton – Cordell's
Minden – CIBC Minden, Ommmh, Minden Home Hardware, Minden Post Office, TD Bank Minden,
Haliburton & Minden – Hudson Henderson Insurance Broker

All pick ups will need to be made BEFORE December 12

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Minden Community Food Centre Christmas Hampers

Call in applications begin November 28 - Dec. 2 and December 5 - 9, from 10 am to 2 pm.

CALL 705-286-6400

Hamper pick up is Wednesday, December 21

If your surname begins with A-M PICK UP AT 1 pm
N-Z PICK UP AT 2 pm

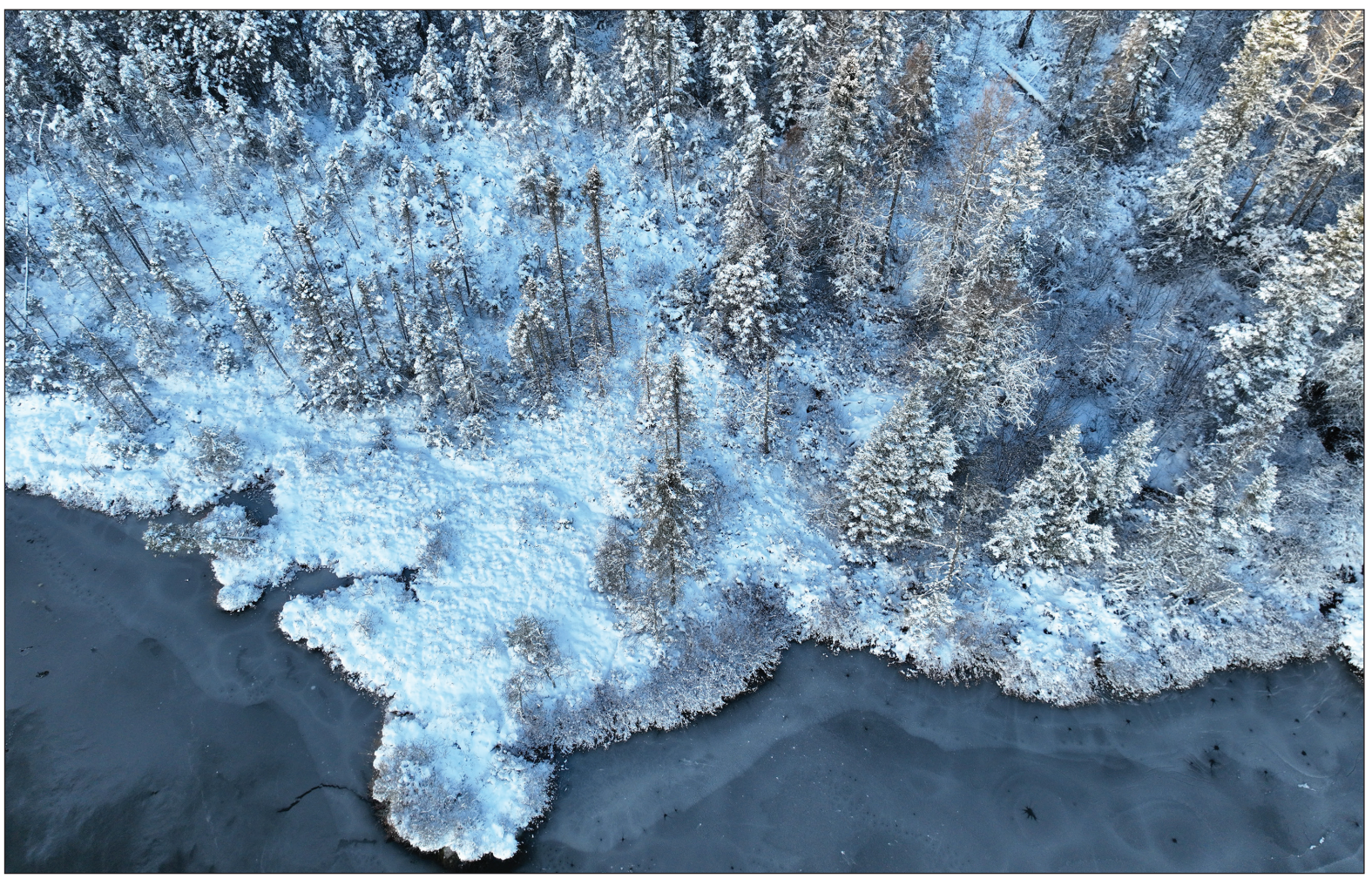
MCFC is closed Monday, Dec. 26

Open Wednesday, Dec. 28 and Monday, Jan. 2

Pick up of hampers is the "DRIVE BY" format.

Nature in your backyard

County Life welcomes photo submissions depicting life in the Highlands. Email vivian@ haliburtonpress.com. Please ensure images are high resolution - 200 dpi, 10 inches at its longest edge.

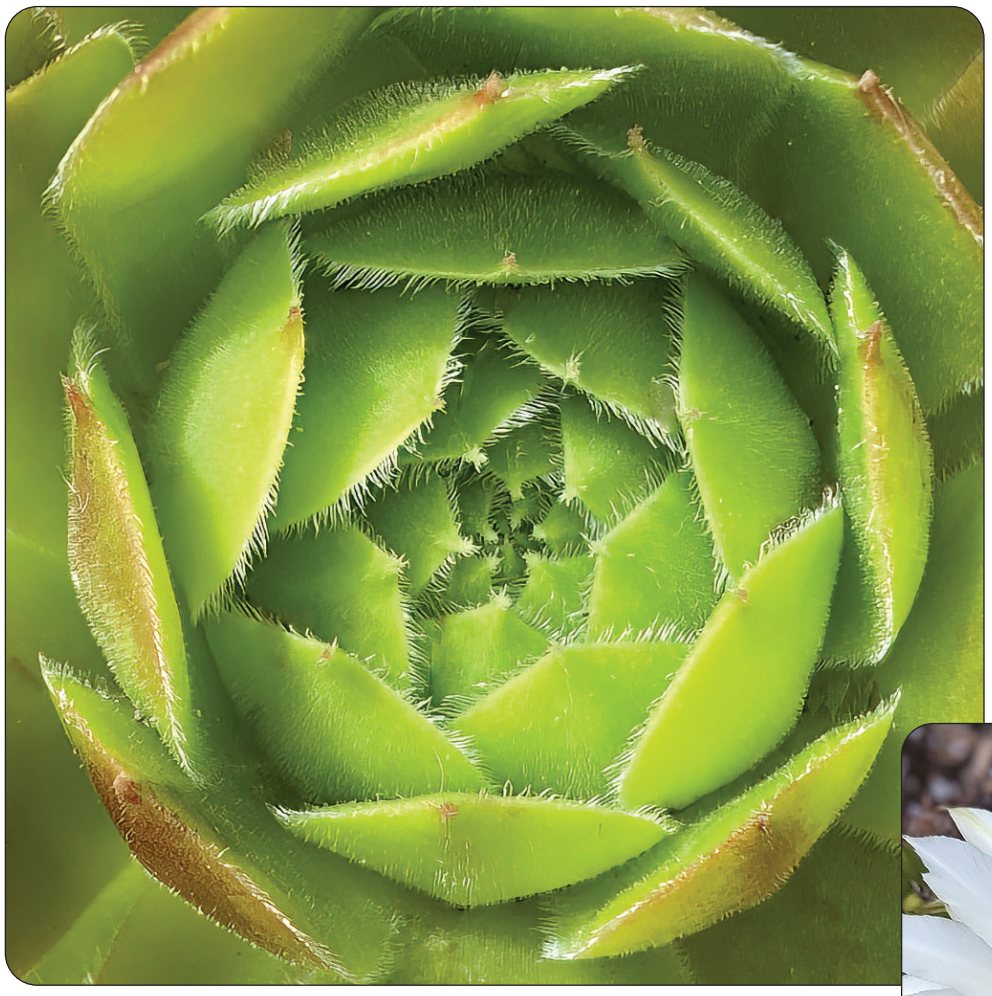


A drone captured freshly-fallen snow on trees and the first formations of ice. / Submitted by Michael Rayias

A chickadee perches on a branch. /Submitted by Jill Moulton

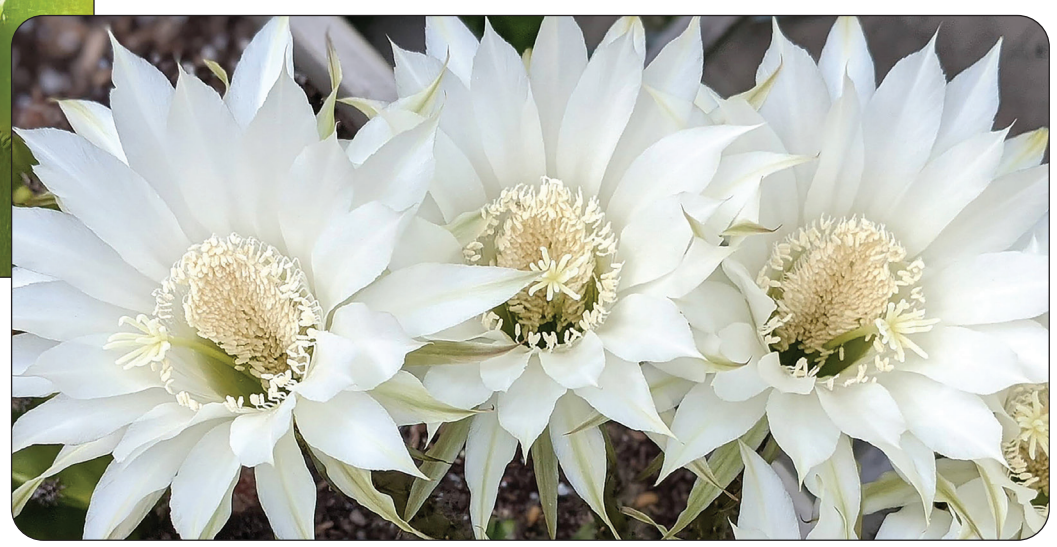
A curious chipmunk stands on a fallen tree to get a better look. /Submitted by Jill Moulton

A squirrel collects snowflakes on its whiskers during a November snowfall. /Submitted by Tammy Nash



Succulent by Wendy Evenden won first place in Haliburton Highlands Camera Club's Fill the Frame competition in November. /Submitted

The club hosts a competition every two months with an assigned topic. The Haliburton Highlands Camera Club is a small group of photography enthusiasts of various experience levels capturing images of the Haliburton Highlands and beyond. New members are always welcome whether they use a smartphone or a high end camera. For more information about the club, visit highlandscameraclub.ca or follow on Facebook.



Cactus Flowers by Hana Curtis won second place.

We're Back!!

Highlands Christmas Shindig

The Highlands Christmas Shindig returns with a fun night of entertainment at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion

SATURDAY DECEMBER 3, 7:30 p.m.

Great family Friendly entertainment with a Christmas touch featuring ... all local performers and your genial hosts Marple Maple and Patsy Pine all for a Heart Warming Cause.

Fuel for Warmth Inc.
Because no one should go cold

Your help is needed more than ever this year
So join us for a winter wonderful night or donate and sponsor the evening.

TICKETS: $30
Tickets available at
Up River Trading Minden & Haliburton
or call 705-457-1354.

The entertainment line-up includes: Drew Allen, a Dramatic presentation by Kate Butler and David Zilstra; Classical music presentation by Tom Regina and Melissa Stephens; the band, "The Recycled Teenagers" folk singer· Jeff Moulton; ballet excerpt from the Nutcracker by Heritage Ballet; and Skyline Ballet ;folk singer Jodi Timgren; and the band "Gord Kidd and Friends".

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Highlands Summer Festival
2023 Season Pass

Here's what is on the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion Stage next summer

DAN NEEDLES in
More Confessions from the Ninth Concession
Starring Dan Needles & Ian Bell
A humorous look at the rural-urban divide that puzzles so many newcomers to the country!
July 26-28

Way-To-Go Productions presents
EARLY MORNING RAIN
THE LEGEND OF GORDON LIGHTFOOT
Celebrating one of the greatest and most prolific Canadian singer-songwriters of all time.
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www.highlandssummerfestival.on.ca

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HSF Highlands Summer Festival — Live Theatre!

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Do something Dramatic this summer

Naturally Yours

Abbey Gardens: Trails and more

RICK WHITTEKER

Special to *County Life*

I like hiking. It is the best way I can find to move the body, exercise the heart and calm the mind. At Abbey Gardens, everything has a ring of sustainability and stewardship to it, which just adds to my hiking enjoyment. With up to 5 km of marked trails, there are plenty of hiking options to choose from. I also like wood fired pizza, craft beer, fresh vegetables and good coffee. These are potential added bonuses to your day hike at this non-profit charity on Highway 118 between Carnarvon and West Guilford.

Picking up the property map at The Food Hub, my exploration of the trails starts with the Mindful Marsh Trail, a 1.5 km trail starting at the south of end of this 300 acre property. This trail passes through a nice mixed hardwood forest, complimented by a bridge crossing a rocky creek and a large marsh at the south end. Here, you will find evidence of beavers, with a recently fortified dam backing up the natural flow of water creating this expansive wetland. Over 20 small black and white bufflehead ducks kept their distance from me while enjoying this calm oasis before heading south to quiet saltwater bays for the winter.

With a flair for alliteration and tongue twisting trail names, the Mindful Marsh Trail hooks up to the Twisted Moose Tracks Trail. On this .9 km trail, I did not see any moose tracks, but found another unique attraction. Short, thick, untreated hemlock boards are laid out close to the trailside on the forest floor. Hikers are encouraged to look for salamanders under these boards, a great way to engage people in nature exploration without significant disturbance to the forest environment. These boards simulate a desirable habitat for forest salamanders and other small critters. Being careful to lift the boards gently from one end, I was lucky enough to find a Redback Salamander under one of the boards.

This common amphibian moved only slightly on this cool autumn day, being ectothermic, or cold blooded, their activity level is dictated by the air and soil temperature around them. Surprisingly, in many Ontario forests, redback salamanders are more numerous than any other vertebrate, but they are seldom seen, as they prefer cool, damp places like below the leaf litter and under fallen trees and rocks. They are also never heard; they are completely mute.

People are asked not to handle the salamanders as your hands need to be clean, free of lotions, bug repellant and the ever-present hand sanitizer. This is difficult to monitor on this self-guided educational opportunity. All amphibians, (frogs, toads, salamanders and newts) "breath" through their skin, hence anything on your hands could affect their health. Redback salamanders filter oxygen through their skin and the roof of their mouth but do not have lungs. Their skin must stay moist to facilitate this process, hence explaining their habitat preferences.

The Twisted Moose Tracks trail links up with the Back Forty Shorty. This 1.6 km loop is wide and flat and leads to the Abbey Gardens Disc Golf Trail and an open meadow, previously a gravel pit. Another trail called the Otter Slide is a short forest romp, twisting and turning like a downhill belly slide of an otter on a luge course. A very family friendly destination, the Otter Slide Trail skirts past the enchanted forest kids' activity area which includes such tantalizing outdoor play locations like a mud kitchen and construction zone.

All trails eventually head back to the central, open area of the property with its off-grid demonstration area, pony paddock, heritage chicken coop, gardens and hoop houses. So much to see and learn, however, my interest in further exploring this dynamic destination is overruled by my need for a hot drink. Returning to The Food Hub, the scent of coffee draws me like a bee to honey, and I see over the counter of baked goods the shiniest espresso maker if have ever seen north of Minden. I order a dark roasted americano, fair trade, single source beans roasted on site in The Hub's kitchen and ground fresh upon ordering. It is rich and flavourful and does not disappoint, just like my visit to the diverse trails and unique attractions at Abbey Gardens.

Having Vision

The rehabilitation of a gravel pit back to life is inspirational. With enough dedication, resources, community support and time it can be done, and the proof is Abbey Gardens. Inspired by similar efforts in Victoria, B.C and Cornwall, UK, John Paterson saw an opportunity in Haliburton County and led the way toward creating a vibrant green space while providing economic and recreation opportunities for the community. Local foods, interpretive displays, drive- in movies, concerts, garlic festivals and kids, youth and adult programs represent just a small sampling of the opportunities available, all helping to sprout new life into a previously barren landscape.

Legion Events

Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Bridge every Monday at 1 p.m. Schofield Room.
Tuesdays: League darts starting at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays:
Bid Euchre 1 p.m. start – Main Hall.
Bingo doors open at 6 p.m.
Bingo starts at 7 p.m. $500 Jackpot - $1000 Jackpot - last Wednesday of the month
Thursdays: General Meeting third Thursday of the month, starting at 7 p.m. All members urged to attend.
Ladies Auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
Fridays: Meat draw has five draws, five prizes each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m.
Tickets are $2 per draw. Ed Pickard, MC.
Friday fun darts from 4:30 p.m. and onwards.
Saturdays: 50/50 Draw 4 p.m. draw – tickets are $1 each available in the Clubroom.
Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, for more information call the Legion today at 705-457-2571, email rcll129@outlook.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com. Come on out and support Haliburton Legion Branch 129 ... everyone is welcome!
Club room hours: Mon. 3 to 6 p.m., Tues. 3 to 9 p.m., Wed/Thurs. 3 to 6 p.m. Fri. 3 to 7 p.m. and Sat. 3 to 6 p.m.

Branch 636 Minden

Monday to Thursday Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. with regular menu and daily special including Liver Lovers' Tuesday.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11a.m. to 2 p.m., Dinner 4 to 7 p.m.
Saturday All Day Breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with Meat draws at 11:30 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541
Weekly Activities:
Karaoke every second Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week
Tuesday: Euchre 1 to 3 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1 to 3 p.m., Darts 7 to 9 p.m. and Euchre 7 to 9 p.m.
Schedules are subject to change without notice, so contact each Legion for updates.

Wilberforce

Friday: 2 to 9 p.m. Wing night and Jam Session 5 to 8 p.m.
Saturday: 2 to 6 p.m. Meat Draw 3 to 6 p.m.
Sunday to Tuesday: CLOSED
Wednesday: 2 to 6 p.m. Darts 2 p.m.
Thursday: 2 to 6 p.m.
Everyone welcome!!
If you are planning a function for social or other event providing our guidelines/conditions are met, please feel free to contact us at 705-448-2221.
Always looking for volunteers!!

HALIBURTON COUNTY HUSKIES

Home Games

S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena

WWW.HUSKIESHOCKEY.CA

Sunday, Dec 11 @ 4 p.m.
vs Cobourg Cougars

Saturday, Dec 17 @ 4 p.m.
vs Toronto Patriots

Sunday, December 11 @ 4 p.m.

Please Join Us & Support
THE MINDEN COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRE!

50/50 Draw

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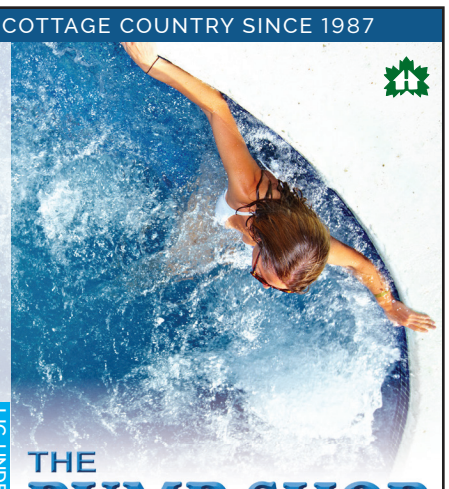

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- Beautiful View of Barnum lake
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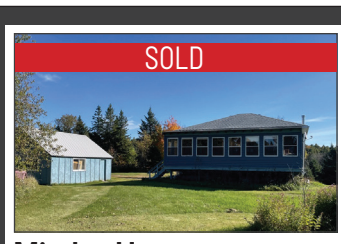
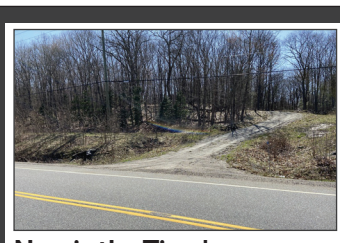


Dagmar Boettcher**
457-5968

Minden Home

- 3 Bedroom Home on 48 Acres
- Many Outbuildings and Open Meadow
- 10 Minutes to Minden
- Home Needs Work, Sold "As Is"



Andy Campbell
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- $499,000, Hwy #35
- To see this property
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- No leaves, Unimpeded views

Gloria Carnochan* & Brean Budel*
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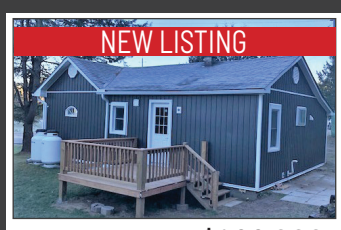
Kennisis Lake $3,875,000

- 4 Beds / 3 Bath Home or Ctg w/ 255ft frontage
- Detached 2 Car Grg, Waters Edge Flagstone Firepit
- Games Rm, Home Gym, Elaborate Lakeside Deck
- Additional 2.3 Acres Available for Purchase

Mark Dennys*
457-0473

Haliburton Condominium $699,900

- 1236 Sq Ft, 3rd Flr, 2 Bdrm, 2 Bath, A/C
- Large Balcony w/ Entertainment Space/Views
- Head Lake (5 Lake Chain), Move-in Ready
- Underground Parking, Close to Walking Trails



Tom Ecclestone*
286-2138 x 226

Minden Home $399,000

- 2 Beds / 1 Bath, 700+ Sq Ft
- All New Windows, Siding, Electrical & More!
- Totally Renovated From Top to Bottom
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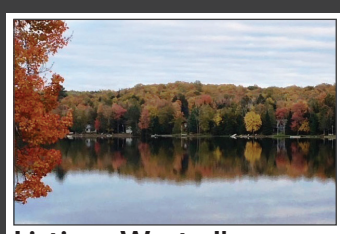

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Andrew Hodgson**
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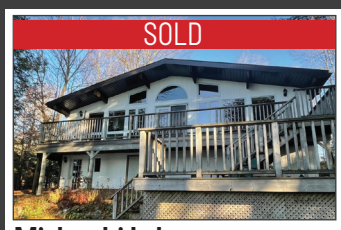
Irondale River $499,000

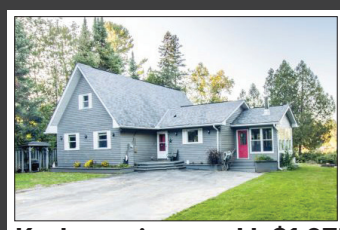
- 4-season waterfront home or cottage
- Enjoy 300+ feet of frontage with western exp
- Updated interior with 3 bedrooms & 1 bath
- Updated bunkie for overflow & large shed



Susanne James* & Andy Mosher**
457-2128 x 133

Miskwabi Lake

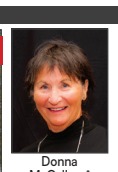
- 4-season cottage on awesome 2-lake chain
- Clean, deep, big lake view, western sunse
- Year-round Municipal road access, 20 mins from Haliburton Village



Ashley McKeigue
705- 854-1833

Kashagawigamog Lk $1,675,000

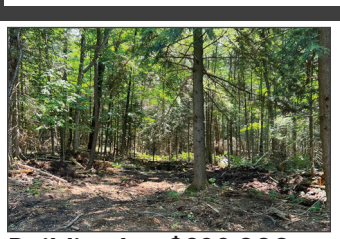
- Year-round home or cottage close to town
- 3 bedrooms, 3 baths across 3 finished levels
- 1 bedroom, 1 bath loft over new 2-car garage
- 100' of frontage with sunset exp & sand beach!



Donna McCallum*
455-2054

Saskatchewan Lake

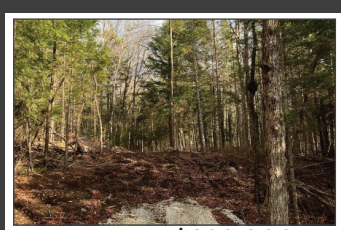
- 2 Beds / 1 Bath, 800 Sq Ft
- 344ft of Flat, Level Shoreline
- Bunkie for Overflow Guests
- The Perfect Traditional Cottage Getaway!



Brandon Nimigon***
457-2128 x 127

Building Lot $238,000

- 290ft of Frtg, Close Proximity to Eagle Lk
- Nicely Treed 2.6 Acre Parcel
- Off Grid Property, Driveway Roughed In
- Abutting Properties For Sale!



Karen Nimigon**
457-6505

Building Lot $288,000

- Nicely Treed 2.4 Acre Lot in Eagle Lake
- Located Under 20 Minutes to Haliburton Village
- Currently Off Grid, Quiet Location
- 2 Abutting Parcels For Sale

Kelly Kay*
705-457-6841
Kirsten Rae*
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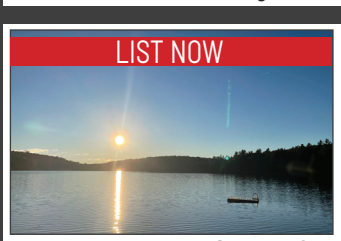
Haliburton Condo $695,000

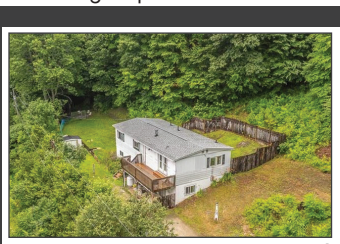
- Luxurious waterfront condo in Haliburton
- 1117 sq ft, 2 bath, 2 bedrooms plus den/office
- Many upgrades plus incredible water views from every room!



Darlene Reil*
447-2055

Thinking About Selling?

- This is the time to think about listing
- Listings Needed!
- Call today for more information



Christine Sharp*
705-489-9968

Investment Opportunity! $495,000

- 5 Bdrm/2 Bath, 2200 Sq Ft
- 1.6 Acre, Features Legal Duplex
- Desirable Area Btwn Carnarvon & Haliburton
- Many Upgrades, Needs Finishing Touches!

Greg Stamp*
457-2128 x 128

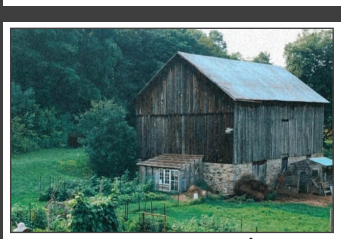
Beautiful Country Home $699,000

- 3 Beds / 2 Bath, 1800 Sq Ft
- 1.39 Acres, Huge Pond w/Sand Beach Area
- Detached 17x30 Garage/Workshop
- Access to Clement Lake Boat Launch

Melanie Vigrass*
286-2138 x 232

Bethel Road $599,900

- Incredible 194-acre parcel 5 mins from Minden
- Long gated driveway- private, cleared building site
- Large frontage on picturesque Walker's Pond
- Trails throughout to explore, teaming with wildlife



Lindsay Wilkinson*
286-2138 x 223

Gooderham Home $759,900

- 3 Bedrooms / 1 Bathroom, 1400+ Sq Ft
- Sits on 2.96 Acres, Cutest Little Hobby Farm!
- Beautiful Gardens & Very Well Maintained Barn

Andrea Wilson**
705-457-6694

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Santa Claus makes his grand entrance

In what many are describing as the best parade this community has seen in a long time, Minden rolled out a slightly damp, but extremely warm welcome for Santa Claus Saturday afternoon. Coordinated by the Minden Lions Club, the parade featured a large selection of floats, two marching bands, including the county's newest flute band, many costumed characters and of course, the jolly old man himself. Hundreds lined the parade route between the arena and downtown. Following the parade, many children visited with Santa at the fire hall. For more photos from Santa's big day, see pages 6 and 7.

Bill 173 introduces new restrictions

Merchants struggle with new smoking rules

by Andrew Milne

Ontario's new Tobacco Control Act came into effect November 30.

The act, which among other things bans smoking in certain businesses serving the public, has received mixed reviews from local business owners.

Stu Brandon runs Northland Sales in Minden.

"It concerns me very much," says Brandon, "that the Rae government sees fit to meddle any more in my business."

"They pretty much," he continues, "with all their existing legislation, additional legislation since they were elected — want to get involved in the day to day operation. And now this just piled on top of the other I find outrageous. I don't disagree with the principle, but it's just one more piece of legislation that needs to be enforced at great expense to the taxpayer."

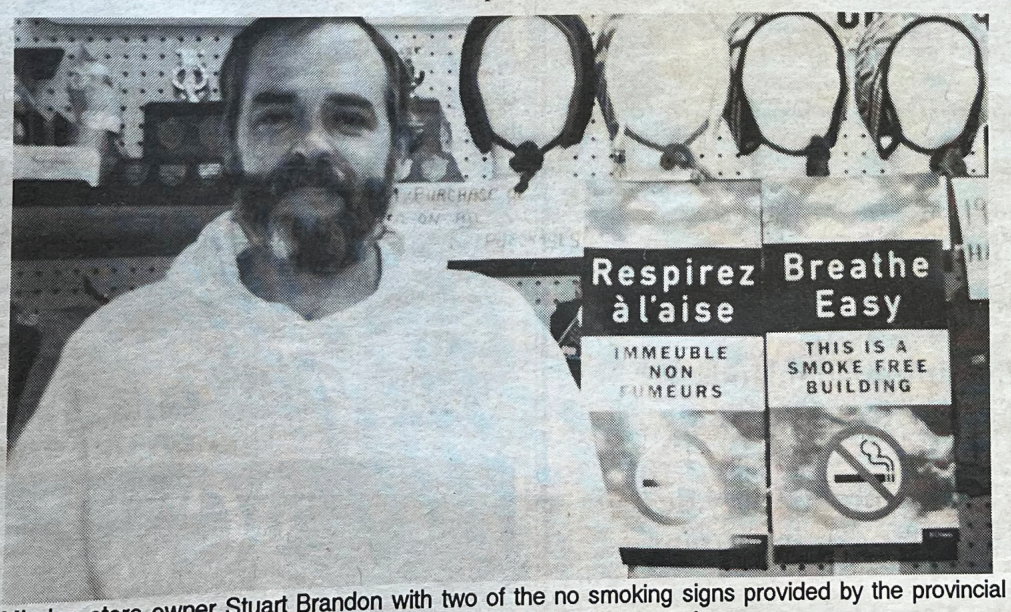
Brandon, along with many other local business owners, received a package in the mail, with details on the new restrictions, and glossy signs in French and English to be posted in his business.

Besides banning smoking in stores, financial institutions, video and amusement arcades, laundromats, hair salons, barber shops and bus shelters and stations, Bill 119:

— makes it illegal to sell or give tobacco to anyone under the age of 19,

— requires persons selling tobacco to post health warnings, age limits, and notices about identification to prove one is of age to purchase tobacco,

— bans the sale of "kiddie packs" — packages with fewer than 20 cigarettes,



Minden store owner Stuart Brandon with two of the no smoking signs provided by the provincial government. Brandon questions the cost of the anti-smoking campaign.

— bans cigarette vending machines,

— requires a list of toxins on tobacco packages, in addition to the now familiar health warnings,

— bans the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies as of Dec. 31,

— restricts smoking to designated areas in malls, hospitals, colleges, and universities,

— requires clearly posted signs in areas in which smoking is restricted or prohibited, and

— sets out more severe fines and penalties for the sale of tobacco to minors, smoking in restricted areas, and the violation of any of the packaging requirements.

Lewis Stevens runs Stop 35, a restaurant on highway 35 in Minden. As a restaurant owner, he already provides smoking and non-smoking areas for his customers, and says he doesn't expect the new legislation will make a huge difference to him.

"It's between a rock and a

(more on page 2)

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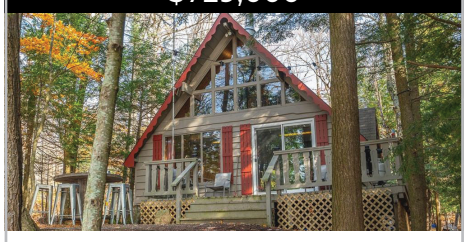

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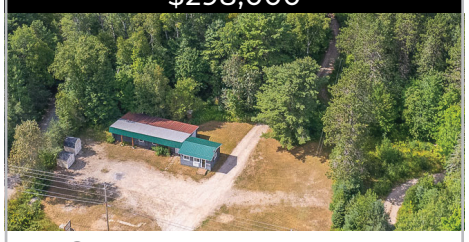

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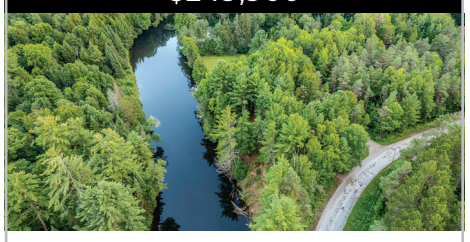

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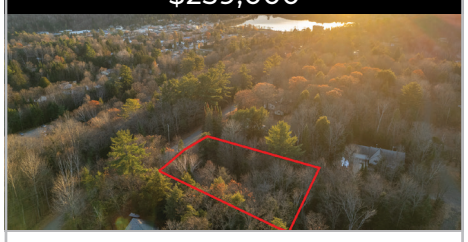
SUNNYSIDE STREET
$239,000



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GREAT LOCATION | 16+ ACRES
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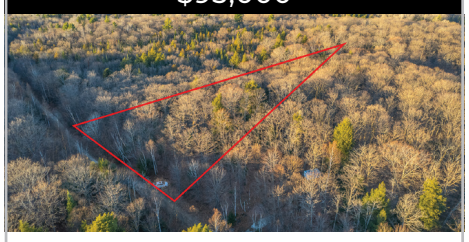
TOWER ROAD
$95,000

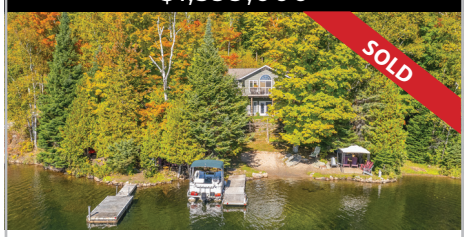


PRIVATE | 2.19 ACRES
OFF-GRID | MLS# 40343517

DRAG RIVER
$249,000

GREAT LOCATION | 2.87 ACRES
245 FT. FRONTAGE | MLS# 40350500

WENONA LAKE
$1,399,000



3 X BED | .693 ACRES | 2273 SQ.FT
3 X BATH | 125 FT. FRONTAGE | MLS# 40332600

IRONDALE RIVER
$249,900

3 X BED | 1.12+ ACRES | 1,177 SQ.FT
2 X BATH | 165 FT. FRONTAGE | MLS# 40335524

KENNISIS LAKE
$2,125,000

4 X BED | 6.27 ACRES | 1900 SQ.FT
3 X BATH | 642.78 FT. FRONTAGE | MLS# 40275471

★★★★★

Linda and her team did a fabulous job from Day 1. Attention to every detail, thorough, responsive. We could not ask for better service and would highly recommend the team to anyone looking to buy or sell!-

H. McDonald

3rd Annual Haliburton County Food & Toy Drive

HAPPENING
NOVEMBER 14 - DECEMBER 11

Shopping List

WEEK 3 - NOV. 28 TO DEC. 4

November 28 - Package of Rice
November 29 - Package of Oatmeal
November 30 - Package of Pasta
December 1 - Spaghetti Sauce
December 2 - Chicken Noodle Soup
December 3 - Tomato Soup
December 4 - Canned Corn

DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

MINDEN
12621 Highway 35, Unit 1
Mon to Fri 9 - 5

HALIBURTON
191 Highland St, Suite 201
Mon to Fri 9 - 5

DONATIONS IN SUPPORT OF OUR AMAZING LOCAL FOOD BANKS AND DRIVES!

Linda Baumgartner - Broker of Record | Owner
(705) 457.3461
contact@haliburtonrealestate.on.ca
www.haliburtonrealestate.on.ca

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Brokerage – independently owned and operated